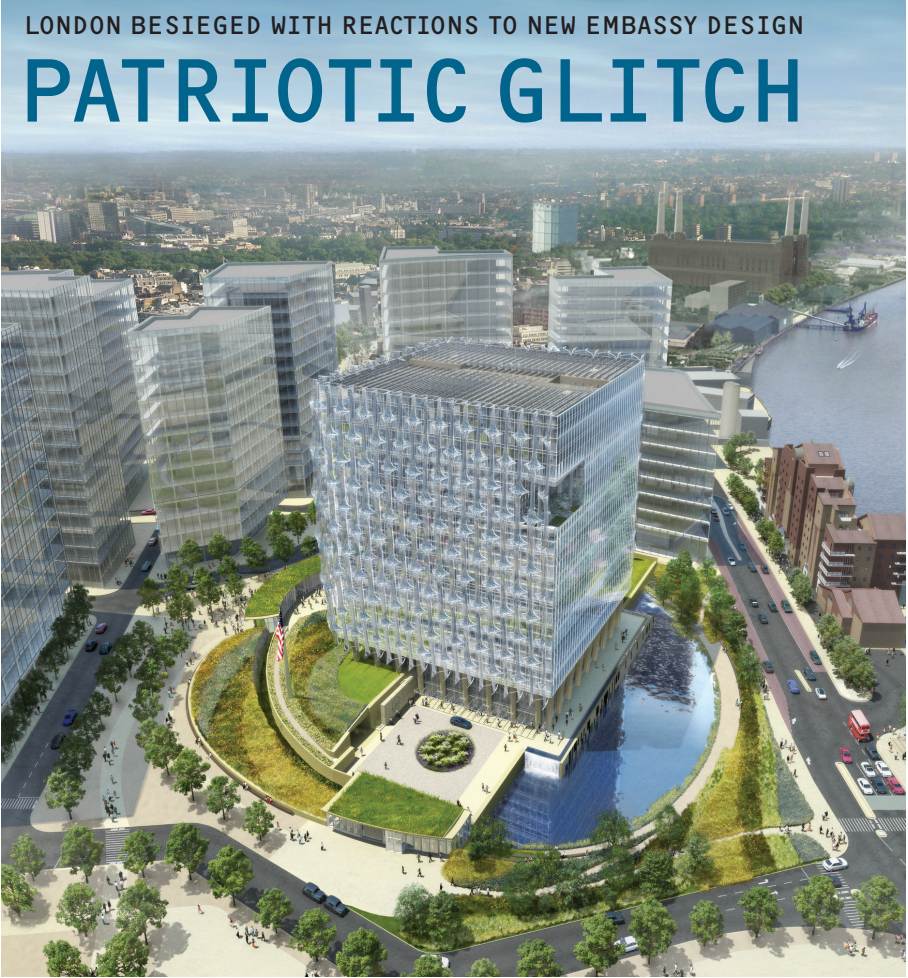


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LONDON BESIEGED WITH REACTIONS TO NEW EMBASSY DESIGN

PATRIOTIC GLITCH

The announcement on February 23 that Philadelphia architects KieranTimberlake had been selected to design the new U.S. embassy in London provoked more excitable responses than the State Department and its jury of architects, academics, and diplomats might have expected. They weren't looking to astonish anyone. **continued on page 8**



BUDGET CRUNCH PUTS STATE PARKS IN JEOPARDY

Thacher Park near Albany could be closed.

Not even during the Great Depression did New York shut its state parks. But last month, an \$8.2 billion state budget deficit prompted the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to recommend the indefinite closing of 41 parks and 14 historic sites across New York state, with reductions in hours and services at an additional 24 sites. In combination with last year's budget cuts, the agency has seen an unprecedented 40 percent reduction in its budget over the last three years, from **continued on page 3**

KEEP OUT

NEW YORK RETHINKS AFFORDABILITY AFTER THE CRASH

HOUSING HOLD-UP

Whether it is the past boom or the recent bust, affordable housing seems always to be in urgent demand. During the good times, rent-controlled and rent-stabilized units vaporized, and now sky-high rents have still not come back to earth. Blame for these developments often falls on the business-friendly Bloomberg administration, but affordable housing advocates and developers argue that the city could be in much worse shape. "Their affordable housing plan is one of the foremost in the country," said Josh Lockwood, executive director of Habitat for Humanity New York City. **continued on page 9**

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PHILADELPHIA RETOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

FACTORY TOWN

To anyone riding Amtrak from New York to Philadelphia, the demise of the former "workshop of the world" is evident in the crumbling brick stacks and punched-out windows of factory relics. But while other cities have all but given up on attracting new industries, **continued on page 8**

HERZOG & DE MEURON, THE OPERA. SEE PAGE 4



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UP FROM NOWHERE

In recent years, we've heard a drumbeat of support for density as the answer to urban ills: Build up, build big, build smart—and the future will follow. And as this issue's feature shows, density is becoming an unlikely mantra even on Long Island as towns face the fact that if they don't grow, they're dead. This is surprising news for a place that long defined single-family sprawl. But thorny questions lie ahead as developers set about building up the suburbs.

To begin with, Long Island's marquee project—the Lighthouse, a new community around the Nassau Coliseum—makes an odd beacon for smart growth, centering on a sports arena like Brooklyn's troubled Atlantic Yards and sited on a former airfield that's bereft of a rail stop. While the project has been backed by planning groups who applaud its promise of walkable urban design, new housing, and jobs, renderings may make it look like a gated enclave for affluent hockey aficionados, and not part of an important effort to support the area's changing population.

For Long Island is no longer a bastion of the privileged. Poverty there increased 22 percent between 2003 and 2007, like other suburbs across the nation that are now home to the fastest-growing populations of the poor. While many new developments include some portion of workforce housing, better coordination at both local and national levels is needed to reckon with the gulf between low-income residents and employment opportunities.

Fine-tuning the housing mix is no simple matter. The health industry, for example, is Long Island's largest employer, but is hampered by high turnover because nursing staffers can't afford to purchase homes in the area. Much attention has been focused on attracting the "echo boomer" generation of young professionals, but offering more rental options for middle-income residents should be another bedrock strategy. Stronger federal support for suburban infrastructure investments, whether it's wastewater treatment plants or new light-rail lines, would also help the burbs cope with the growing burden of basic services.

Because counties can't—or won't—do it themselves. The new Nassau County executive, Edward Mangano, has been slashing spending in what is one of the highest-taxed counties in the nation, and one where voters are averse to redevelopment. "There is a big fear that any type of new housing development is going to increase school property taxes," said Christopher Jones, vice president for research at the Regional Plan Association, who adds that most multifamily developments—especially those built around train stations—do the opposite. Clearly, officials must get the word out about density's bottom line.

Long Island needs investment at all scales to survive, but politicians should think through the implications before hitching their suburbs to huge developments like the Lighthouse and its brethren. As much as megaprojects, we would do well to promote the more fine-grained retrofitting under way across the region, a sensible strategy of incremental urbanism focused on one infill building, one renovated library, one reviving hamlet at a time. **JEFF BYLES**

Hours reduced at West Harlem's Riverbank State Park.



COURTESY NEW YORK STATE PARKS

KEEP OUT continued from front page
\$250 million to \$155 million.

In addition to parks, the list of cutbacks includes historic sites such as military forts, battlefields, and swimming beaches from Long Island to Niagara Falls. "We looked at a number of factors, including visitation, operating costs, and revenues," said Dan Keefe, spokesperson for the OPRHP. "And we tried to spread the closings out across the state." The list includes two parks within New York City: Queens' Bayswater Point State Park, to be closed indefinitely, and Harlem's Riverbank State Park, whose current operating hours of 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily would be reduced to 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

The current list of cutbacks could grow, according to Albany-based nonprofit Parks & Trails New York, which predicts that the state legislature is likely to repeal an additional \$5 million this month in Environmental Protection Fund money (an amount that the OPRHP is currently counting in its budget). The loss of those funds could prompt an additional 34 closings and reductions.

Until the budget is finalized for the state's next fiscal year, which begins on April 1, advocates are lobbying to change the legislature's mind. The crux of their case is that the government is underestimating the parks' economic benefits. "It's obvious that parks were seen as expendable in our budget this year," said Shawn McConnell, Parks & Trails' director of the Campaign for Parks. "And our argument is that they are not, that they are actually essential in helping us climb our way out of this economic hardship we're in." A report commissioned by the organization estimates that spending by park visitors and by OPRHP supports \$1.9 billion in economic activity and 20,000 jobs annually.

It is not yet clear whether and how the parks will be preserved while they are closed. Historic sites may be at particular risk, such as Fort Ontario Park, built by the British in 1755 and designated a historic site in 1949. "Once the facilities start to deteriorate, they will become very expensive to reopen," McConnell warned. While the goal is to eventually reopen all the sites, Keefe said the agency had not yet reached any decisions about upkeep until then. **JULIA GALEF**

LETTERS

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE

The memorial to David Sarkisyan written by Jean-Louis Cohen (AN 03_02.17.2010) speaks much about the man. As a statement at this time of his passing, I see a man with a mission. But should further articles about Sarkisyan be written, I hope that the political context and what appears to be his alignment with mother Russia will be dealt with.

Sarkisyan apparently did well, but many people who experienced the rule of communist Russia did not do so well, and in fact lived under fear of being considered an enemy of the state. Many were sent to the gulag. Having a connection or something to barter always

helped make life easier.

Last January, New York's Center for Architecture hosted Andrey Bokov, president of the Union of Architects of Russia. All of his projects were directly state-funded works. In a nation where censorship of the arts assures that the art honor the state—whether that be cinema, the written word, or fine art—I have to ask how Bokov really got his position and maintained it. Am I seeing a thread here, in which the context of the architect's work does not come into question, especially with respect to architects from Russia?

And lastly, I must ask Jean-Louis Cohen: Is Stalinist kitsch like Hitler knick-knacks?

There are divided interpretations regarding Stalin's atrocities, where those who honor him claim that he saved the great empire of Russia, and that the means justified his actions. Apparently, Cohen agrees. Hitler is credited with killing 12 million in connection to the concentration and slave labor camps. Stalin's number is debated, but can be as high as 42 million, with 17 million in Russia alone.

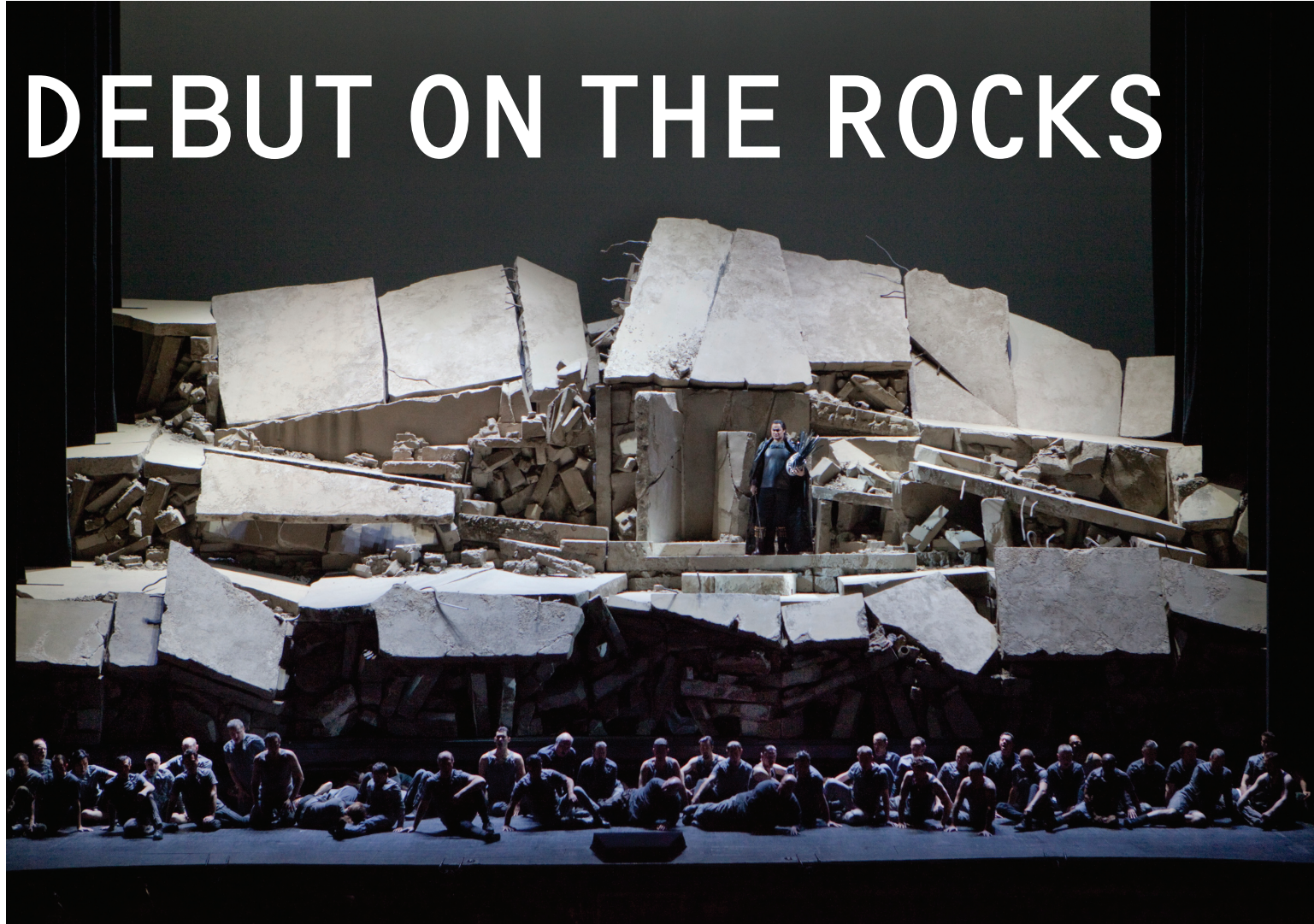
So you certainly presented Sarkisyan as being a cool, oh-so-cool guy.

PETER SCAGLIONE
NEW YORK

CORRECTIONS

Our feature on the Architectural League's Emerging Voices (AN 04_03.03.2010) misstated the status of a project designed by Slade Architecture. While the firm has worked on designs for the Shark Exhibit Building at Coney Island, the project has since been redesigned by other architects, and Slade's scheme is not moving ahead.

A review of a book about architect Henri Jova ("Twilight of the Beaux Arts Boys," AN 01_01.20.2010) omitted part of the book's title. The full title is *Henri Jova, A Classical Intermezzo: An Architect's Life*.



With a massive pile of light-weight rubble and a wilderness of boxwood hedge and ivy, architects Herzog & de Meuron made their Metropolitan Opera debut last month with set designs for *Attila*, Verdi's tale of the 5th-century horde-master on a love rampage. Miuccia Prada designed the costumes.

Jacques Herzog said in a program video that the design concept was to capture a "hyper-real" sense of a destroyed world collapsing into an overgrown fairy-tale realm of mystery and foreboding. Nothing romantic intended, of course. And to drive the harsh reality home, the lighting throughout is purely artificial, akin to lighting found in hospitals, military barracks, and explosions—"a dangerous, steaming glow," he said.

Herzog & de Meuron's engagement with *Attila* was secured soon after Peter Gelb, the Met's general manager, saw their set—a Mylar tube with dents—for *Tristan und Isolde* at the Berlin State Opera in 2006. It is unclear who brought in Prada, but surely it would have taken a cultural outsider of Attila-like ignorance to say no to that degree of knockout star wattage. **JULIE V. IOVINE**

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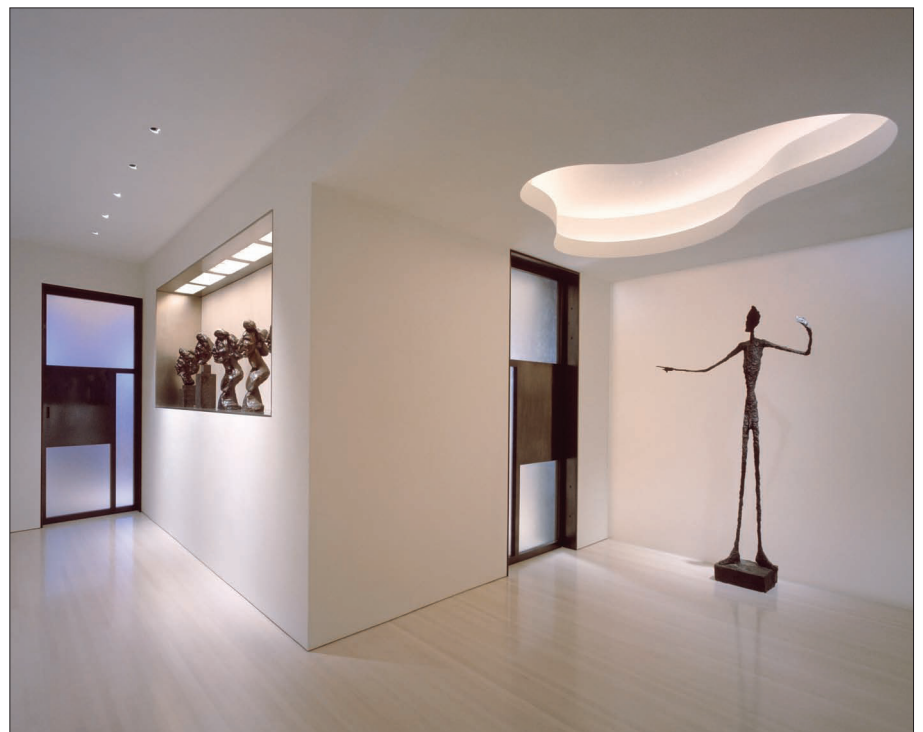
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THROUGH THE GLASS MULLIONS

Eavesdrop has been admiring the crackling, crystallized facade at 100 11th Avenue in West Chelsea since the first “megapanel” was hoisted into place about a year ago. And finally on March 4, looking “at” led to looking “in,” which, once in, was all about looking “out.”

The occasion was a glummy cocktail party to show off an 8th-floor apartment and Penthouse A of the not-nearly completed 23-story condo tower, designed by French architect and leather aficionado **Jean Nouvel** and New York-based Beyer Blinder Belle. Hosted by developers Cape Advisors, the architect du jour indulged a stream of admirers in the 8th-floor apartment, while television crews recorded his every *bon mot*. Lots of real-estate suits attended, along with some design-media folks—**Wayne Lawson**, **Arthur Lubow**, **Fred Bernstein**, **Kate Linker**, **Mayer Rus**, **Suzanne Stephens**, and recently savaged *New York Times* architecture critic Nicolai Ouroussoff. French wine and divine hors d'oeuvres were in abundance—foie gras on toast disks, salmon tied up in tiny packages, and curry chicken morsels. You'd think there was a boom going on.

The real shock and awe was in the penthouse, where the view was all bright lights, big city. (In fact, we spotted **Jay McInerney**.) Some guests gazed deep into **Frank Gehry's** snow globe for **Barry Diller** across 19th Street; others peered from behind thick mullions down on people behind bars at the Bayview Correctional Facility on 11th Avenue. Navigating our descent from the gusty roof terrace down a steep and narrow terrazzo stair, Eavesdrop wondered if it's legal to have such a long run without a landing.

Finally in the elevator, a cameraman from CBS told us that a segment will air on *CBS Sunday Morning* in a couple of weeks. I hope **Mo Rocca** gives the place a new moniker: “Vision Machine” sounds like a prosthesis for the blind, or a device human-resources people use to weed out job applications.

ROCKWELL AGLITTER

Eavesdrop saw a one-second shot of a tense **David Rockwell** in the audience at the 82nd Academy Awards show on March 7. The New York architect was back for the second consecutive year. Proving that Nouvel isn't the only designer with sparkle, Rockwell dressed the proscenium arch with more than 100,000 Swarovski crystals, showing off more dazzle than most of the starlets in their divine-wear.

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J. STEPHEN CONN

WILL IT BE A MAKEOVER FOR CHICAGO'S GREAT HALL OR HELMUT JAHN ALTERNATIVE?

TALKING TRACKS

Chicago's Union Station has a split personality. The Beaux Arts head house, which includes the Great Hall, is underused and often nearly empty. The below-ground concourse level, however, is overcrowded with passengers due to poor pedestrian circulation. Amtrak, which owns the station through a subsidiary, is seeking to remedy that situation with an RFP for the head house and an eventual redesign of the concourse level. Meanwhile, the architect Helmut Jahn has proposed an alternative station as the hub of a new high-speed rail network.

Designed by Burnham & Root and completed in 1927, Union Station was diminished by the 1969 demolition of its aboveground concourse building, leaving the head house somewhat orphaned. Amtrak has asked seven architecture and real estate teams to respond to the RFP to redesign and reprogram the head house, including the architects SOM Chicago, KlingStubbins and Wallace Roberts & Todd of Philadelphia, Goody Clancy of Boston, and Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn of New York, along with the real estate firms Jones Lang LaSalle and U.S. Equities Realty. “It's

very open-ended. The space is largely vacant,” said Marc Magliari, a spokesman for Amtrak.

The railroad is studying the belowground concourse, which was most recently renovated in 1991 by the architect Lucien Lagrange. A first-class passenger lounge and offices may be relocated to make room for additional bathrooms and passenger waiting areas. “We have outgrown our capacity in the concourse,” Magliari said, adding that Lagrange will likely be retained for that job.

At the same time, architects Murphy/Jahn, working for Reuben Hedlund, former head of the Chicago Plan Commission, are calling for a new station nearby to accommodate high-speed rail trains to be built over existing north/south rail lines. By using these lines, the station could accommodate rapid trains from St. Louis that would continue on to points north, like Minneapolis or Detroit, while commuter rail would remain at Union Station. Magliari points out that there are two north/south lines at Union Station, but he declined to speculate if that would be enough to accommodate an expanded high-speed network.

ALAN G. BRAKE



MICHAEL MORAN

> **CHOICE MARKET**
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The Brooklyn emporium Choice has opened its latest location in Dumbo, and the new eatery reflects the district's industrial-chic aesthetic. A subdued palette of tan Chinese stone, polished concrete, and Cor-Ten steel offers a comfortable yet contemporary look, but a surprise awaits overhead in the cafe's exuberant ceiling. With volutes and swirling forms that recall baroque and rococo decoration, the custom-made work bears the signature of Brooklyn-based design firm Evan Douglass Studio. Drawing on a longstanding interest in ornamental motifs and emerging fabrication technologies, the architect created the new modular ceiling with 16 primary components that were computer-designed and 3D printed. From these originals, the team cast 635 lightweight urethane replicas. These elements were then arranged to give an illusion of continual, whorling motion. Looking like dollops of whipped cream, the forms have a “magical and soothing quality,” said principal Evan Douglass, while containing the cafe's sound and sprinkler systems. Suspended from the construction are 45 hand-blown glass chandeliers—named *Moon Jelly*, the bubble-shaped pieces are like “fireflies that float underneath the night sky,” according to Douglass—and add the final baroque flourish to this otherwise minimalist interior. **REBECCA GORDAN**

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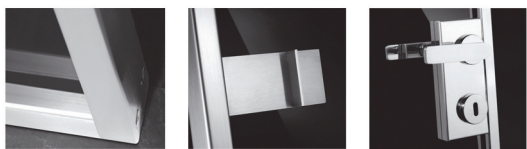
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PROPOSED VORNADO TOWER WOULD TOPPLE
HOTEL PENNSYLVANIA

ANOTHER PENN

Of the dozens of buildings designed by McKim, Mead & White in New York City, nearly every one has become a protected landmark. One of the few unprotected could soon be headed for the wrecking ball, replaced by an office tower designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli that would surpass every skyscraper in Midtown but the Empire State Building.

Completed on 7th Avenue in 1919, almost a decade after its namesake depot across the street, the Hotel Pennsylvania was the third piece in a McKim, Mead & White trifecta that included Pennsylvania Station and the Farley Post Office. With one of those crown jewels already gone, and another set to be revamped (on February 16, Senator Charles Schumer announced \$83 million in stimulus money for Moynihan Station), the Hotel Pennsylvania would be the last original piece of McKim, Mead & White's work in the area.

Speculation about the hotel's demise began in the late 1990s, when the Vornado Realty Trust took a controlling stake in the building. The latest plans, for a 1,190-foot-tall office tower, began in earnest two years ago, when Vornado began negotiations with Merrill Lynch to move its headquarters to the tower. The company's

board was set to vote on the matter when the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 effectively killed the deal.

Meanwhile, little was heard from the same preservation groups who decried the destruction of Pennsylvania Station. The Municipal Art Society actually backed the Vornado project, because at the time the developer was working on Moynihan Station. In a statement, MAS President Vin Cipolla acknowledged that the hotel may have "cultural significance" for many New Yorkers. He added, "The Municipal Art Society is taking a comprehensive look at the Far West Side and weighing how any new developments work in conjunction with that new station."

Ultimately, a group of computer hackers who hold their annual convention at the hotel fought hardest for the building. Among them was Gregory Jones, who lobbied numerous politicians and civic groups. "All of them have snubbed out efforts to preserve the hotel," he said. The local community board did vote for landmark designation, but the Landmarks Preservation Commission declined to hold a public hearing, deeming the hotel a later work exemplary of neither the firm nor the period. Vornado is now moving

ahead with two plans: one tower for an as-yet unknown anchor tenant, and an alternate design to accommodate multiple tenants, both of which were certified by the City Planning Commission on February 8 and will go through the seven-month public review process. Both buildings house roughly two million square feet, or 42.5 percent in excess of current zoning.

A Vornado spokesperson declined to comment except to say that the developer has determined that "now is a good time to go forward with this project." The community does not think so, however, as the board's land-use committee voted unanimously against the tower on February 24.

MATT CHABAN



COURTESY VORNADO



COURTESY CUP

CUP FIELD-TESTS AFFORDABLE
HOUSING KIT

TOOLED UP

Two years ago, the Brooklyn-based Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) asked housing advocates and community groups what educational tools they needed most. The topic of affordable housing was at the top of the list, and in response, CUP helped design a novel solution: a red plastic kit of parts called the Affordable Housing Toolkit.

Inside the box is a colorful felt chart for workshops, a basic guidebook, and the coordinates of an online map that displays income demographics in different neighbor-

hoods. Developed with graphic design studio MTWTF, the Pratt Center for Community and Economic Development, and the Brooklyn-based advocacy group Fifth Avenue Committee, the project aims to get New Yorkers to ask a fundamental question: "Affordable to whom?"

Christine Gaspar, CUP's executive director, said she hopes the kit will help individuals understand how affordable housing works. "This means that they can advocate in their own community, talk to elected officials, and hold them accountable to the decisions they make." Dave Powell, a tenant organizer, added that the pedagogic approach is necessary, since the finer points of housing policy are rarely conveyed to citizens. "CUP helps us deconstruct our environment in order to advocate for social justice," he said, "which we are unable to do simply by reading through hundreds of tax pages from the planning department."

At a time when a third of the city's residents spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing, the toolkit might perhaps be better called a first-aid kit. Fortunately, this effort is just the first in CUP's program called Envisioning Development Toolkits, which aims to demystify New York City's endlessly confusing land-use review process.

RG



For Vittorio Giorgini, work was a mission of moral integrity, an obligation similar in content to the commitment made by intellectuals and architects of the modern movement following World War II reconstruction: Le Corbusier, Leonardo Ricci, and particularly Kenzo Tange and Kisho Kurokawa, both members of the Japanese avant-garde of the 1960s.

Similarly, he shared a vision and, in some instances, long-lasting friendships with prominent artists like Andre Bloc, Frederick Kiesler, Jean Arp, Henry Moore, Isamu Noguchi, and his close friend, the Chilean Roberto Matta. He believed that knowledge, art, and architecture could and should contribute to the making of a freer society.

Toward that end, he conceived superstructures lifted above the ground to minimize human environmental impact. He designed intelligent habitats that explored space through a complex triangulation of engineered parts in different scales and applications, an explicit negation of traditional methods of construction. And he devised projects based on tension structures that contain multifunctional suspended platforms, with residential and commercial facilities, bridges, elevators, and transportation hubs. Among these visions were his *South Street Seaport Center*, New York (1979); *River Crane*, Roosevelt Island, New York (1993); and the *Messina Bridge Monorail* in Italy (1998-99). These designs illustrated the principle that without physical boundaries, architecture becomes, at moments, pure growth, sharing a process associated with the biological constructions one can observe in nature.

Vittorio Giorgini worked in New York City since his arrival here in the early 1970s, both as a professor at Pratt Institute, where I met him in 1972, and as an architect. His residence-atelier in Soho became the meeting point for colleagues, artists, friends, and students attracted by his personality and generosity, all driven by the desire to be part of a unique personal and professional experience—an atmosphere of cultured humanity, Florentine refinement, and most of all, humor and irony.

GIULIANO FIORENTOLI IS AN ARCHITECT AND PROFESSOR AT PRATT INSTITUTE.

I met Vittorio Giorgini in 1972 when he began teaching at Pratt. He was there until 1996, when he returned to Florence. A few years

later, we received the funding for the Center for Experimental Structures at the School of Architecture, of which he was co-founder, along with John Johansen, William Katavalos, and myself. At the center, we have some of his images, including *River Crane* and an image of the *Liberty Center* in upstate New York. The latter was a wire-mesh construction with compound curvatures that had the distinguishing topological feature of a continuous surface like the mobius strip, but here designed as a community center for the town of Parksville. This mesh structure, built in 1976 by Pratt students under Giorgini's supervision, was going to be covered with concrete, but never was due to lack of funding. It is the first example of true topological architecture in the U.S.

The unfinished *Liberty Center* came on the heels of several topological and urban projects, including the Casa Saldarini, built in 1962 and conceived three years earlier. This house is the first contemporary topological building in architecture, and is rightfully in the process of being preserved as a historic landmark in Tuscany. Giorgini's experiments in topology began with the vision of making buildings the way nature builds. When he met the Swiss cardiologist Hans Jenny in 1956, whose work was known from the pioneering images of vibrating powders and fluids under the term "Cymatics," Giorgini envisioned building in that manner. This dream wasn't realized, but the search for nature's building methods lies at the heart of this approach.

Giorgini influenced generations of students through his teaching based on a rigorous design methodology that addressed urban problems mediated by structural morphology. At Pratt, he was like a school within a school, mustering a following that spilled into his professional work and contributed to the visualizations of some of his unique projects developed within his loft in Soho.

His work is in the permanent collection at two major institutions in France, the Pompidou Center and FRAC. He is the author of *Spatiology: the morphology of the natural sciences in architecture and design* (L'Arca, 1995). The book *Vittorio Giorgini, La Natura come Modello* by Marco Del Francia (Angleo Pontecorboli Editore, Firenze, 2000) is the most complete book on his work.

HARESH LALVANI CO-FOUNDED PRATT INSTITUTE'S CENTER FOR EXPERIMENTAL STRUCTURES.



The Cooper Union's new academic building by Morphosis architect Thom Mayne is not only rekindling the school's ability to inspire new generations of art, architecture and engineering students, its dynamic, shimmering form is igniting the imaginations of all who pass through Cooper Square as well. Much of this energy is owed to the unique transparency of the building's steel-and-glass double skin wall system, reducing solar gain while bringing to light the ability of architects, and of ornamental metal, to transform design aspirations into reality.

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Architect: Morphosis
Associate Architect:
Gruzen Samton
Structural Engineers:
John A. Martin & Associates;
Goldstein Associates
Photo: © Joseph David

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 17, 2010

MAKING WAVES



Greenwich Village has a current all its own, so architect **Kohn Pedersen Fox** wanted a free-spirited façade for new condo **One Jackson Square**. More than just eccentric expression, the undulating walls maximize the site's allowable floor area in two separate zoning districts. Realizing a design this fluid demands an extraordinary level of precision. With no two window panels alike, high-tech computer modeling needed old world craftsmanship to produce the desired metal and glass waves—making the new facade at Greenwich and 8th as unique as its time-honored neighbors.

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Architect: Bill Pedersen,
Kohn Pedersen Fox
Associates
Photo: © Paúl Rivera

The main entry space of KieranTimberlake's design for the U.S. Embassy in London.



PATRIOTIC GLITCH

continued from front page

But within a day of the announcement, the two British jurors, architect Richard Rogers and developer/patron Peter Palumbo, both lords, allowed news to slip out that they strongly opposed the winning selection, calling it “unfit to represent the U.S. in Britain.” Of course, for 50 years, not many liked Eero Saarinen's concrete-with-eagle U.S. embassy in Grosvenor Square, either.

The 15-month competition for that building's replacement in rough-but-ready Battersea winnowed the search from 37 to nine to four firms, a medley of the usual distinguished suspects (Richard Meier & Partners, Pei Cobb Freed & Partners), the radical chic (Morphosis), and the new elite

(KieranTimberlake).

Apart from international prestige, patriotism, and the chance to be mentioned in the same breath as Saarinen for years to come, the project to build an American embassy in London was burdened with a no-win program: a Bunker of Freedom.

With the selection of KieranTimberlake, a firm that is emerging as both clever and accommodating, especially when it comes to affordability and sustainable issues—thanks to the high-profile role of their Cellophane House in the MoMA prefab houses exhibition of 2008—the jury was being true to its innate conservative instincts while making a reach just far enough to embrace youth and environmentalism.

The cube is a shape of universal integrity. The moat,

ramps, and greenswards are as elegant and tasteful as the refined landscape architect Laurie Olin could get them—a triumph of bollard-free design. But whether or not the deciders really thought through the symbolic potential of the EFTE plastic-wrapped but also bomb-proofed facades, and the moat-like quality of the water feature, is an open question.

It's solid, it's green, and it will draw more people to a neighborhood in need of development. In Washington, D.C., the best that can be said of many a foreign embassy is that they blend in seamlessly. Conspicuous risk-taking and diplomacy generally do not mix, but perhaps KieranTimberlake's design will impress us yet with its smarts.

JVI

FACTORY TOWN continued from front page

Philadelphia has embarked on conceptualizing a revitalized manufacturing future.

Sponsored by the Philadelphia Community Design Collaborative with the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), *Infill Philadelphia: Industrial Sites* kicked off its latest phase on February 16 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, where a panel discussion (in which I participated) introduced the centerpiece of the project: the designation of three sites—along with three design teams—to serve as test cases for reinventing run-down factory buildings.

To an audience of over 200 people, Beth Miller, executive director of the Community Design Collaborative, outlined the context for the initiative, emphasizing ways that new industry types in Philadelphia—such as smaller green industries, furniture makers, or apparel manufacturers—could be incorporated by partnering with local stakeholders. The keynote speaker, William Struever, president of Baltimore-based developer Struever Bros. Eccles & Rouse, offered lessons from his firm's projects, showing how industrial buildings could be adaptively reused with real clients and local businesses who are committed to community revitalization.

Focusing on local initiatives, John Grady, vice president of the PIDC, discussed the

group's redevelopment of the 1,200-acre Philadelphia Navy Yard with light manufacturing and corporate offices for companies such as Urban Outfitters and Tasty Baking Company, while maintaining Navy-based research in the historic buildings. Together with the City Planning Commission, the group has launched a study to provide new data on industrial land-use, and to look at how rezoning sites for new, clean, high-tech, open-source, and flexible industries could provide jobs in local communities.

To test these ideas, design teams will investigate ways that old manufacturing sites can be reimagined to sustain industries. Three volunteer firms—SMP Architects, DIGSAU, and Charles Loomis Chariss McAfee Architects—have joined forces with community-based groups and manufacturers on specific sites with the owners' consent. The initiative—funded by the William Penn Foundation, the Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development, and others—will be unveiled in May, as will the city's zoning studies. The exhibit *Retooling Industrial Sites*, on display until March 26 at the Community Design Collaborative, featured renovations of former industrial buildings across the country, and suggested a multitude of strategies for transforming industrial sites.

NINA RAPPAPORT

HOUSING HOLD-UP continued from front page
 "It's pretty amazing that they're on track in the middle of this recession."

Lockwood was referring to the New Housing Marketplace plan, updated on February 22. The centerpiece of the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's affordable housing efforts, the plan was first laid out in 2002, and greatly expanded in 2005 on the eve of the mayor's first re-election. It called for 165,000 units for some 500,000 residents by 2013, half of which would be created through new construction, often within market-rate developments, half through preservation of existing affordable units.

The mayor announced that the program was indeed on track (with 100,000 units so far), but was now going to take a slightly different tack, emphasizing retrofits and preservation over construction. He was making a visit to New York University's Furman Center to congratulate it on the launch of its new Institute for Affordable Housing.

In spite of the plan's continued success, it is not immune to the current economy: Keeping it afloat will cost the city an additional \$1 billion, and the completion date has been pushed back to 2014. Holly Leicht, Deputy Commissioner for Development at HPD, sees these changes as a virtue, not a failure.

The city initially capitalized on new construction, leveraging inclusionary zoning and tax credits to entice developers to build in affordable units. With construction credit still frozen, almost no units are now being created through this route, so the department has shifted its money to the other half of the equation, preserving units through tax credits and low-interest loans.

"A lot of owners, particularly in Mitchell Llama housing, may have seen a pot of gold before, but now that pot of gold is gone, and they are much more interested in talking to us," Leicht said. This is an especially enticing approach for the department because it has already committed heavily to such developments. Keeping them affordable now extends that investment. And with new construction stalled, preservation suddenly feels more immediate. "It's taking longer, but we always anticipated this would be a long-term strategy," she said.

There are other new programs in support of affordable housing, though they are experiencing only varying degrees of success. The city has received two rounds of Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding from the federal government, which uses innovative data-tracking to fund small-scale projects, from homeownership assistance to foreclosure purchasing, to head off the sort of disinvestment that plagued the city in the 1970s and '80s.

One program that has yet to bear fruit, however, is one of the most celebrated, at least by the politicians who created it. With upwards of 600 stalled construction projects in the city, last summer, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn proposed the Housing Asset Renewal Program, or HARP. The program would use city money to provide bridge loans to stalled projects, with \$25,000 to \$50,000 provided for each unit the developer converted to affordable housing. The goal was to create about 400 affordable units but so far, no projects have gone ahead.

A deadline was originally set for December, but it was pushed back to April for lack of quality bids. Leicht said there are better offers coming in now, with more variety—not just small projects in the outer boroughs. The problem remains that few lenders, even with foreclosures in the offing, are willing to take the necessary discounts the program demands.

"It's a great idea," said Jerilyn Perine, executive director of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council, a local nonprofit research organization. "Ironically, because people are optimistic about our future here in New York, they aren't willing to take a hit yet on their investment."

On the upside, Habitat for Humanity is prospering. It has recently partnered with New York State to develop super low-interest mortgages for homeowners. With the proceeds, they are now able for the first time to take out construction loans expanding their building program. The group has also been negotiating short sales to keep buildings occupied and using its volunteers to clean up community centers and parks, making distressed neighborhoods less so. "Now's the time to get creative," Lockwood said.

MC

AT DEADLINE

BILLINGS BOMB

While economists keep insisting the recession is over, that may not be the case for architects. The AIA Architecture Billings Index had a steep decline in January following months of relative stability. The index, released on February 24, fell 2.9 points to 42.5 from 45.4 in December, the first negative shift of more than a point in seven months. Compounding concerns, inquiries for new work dropped 7.2 points to 52.5 from 59.7 in January, the steepest decline since October 2008. (A reading above 50 means interest is rising, below that, it's falling.)

The AIA blames the major lending institutions and the inability of clients to find financing for their projects. Keep an eye out for February billings, which will give a better sense as to whether the latest numbers are simply another fluctuation in uncertain times or a new deterioration in the market.

SCARANO STRIKES OUT

Loose-cannon architect Robert Scarano of Brooklyn may not be in practice much longer. On March 1, an administrative judge ruled that Scarano had lied to the Department of Buildings about two of his projects. Three days later, the city barred the architect from filing any building documents, including permit applications and construction plans. Scarano, who designed dozens of buildings citywide during the real estate boom, was criticized for abusing the city's self-certification program. In 2008, his right to self-certify was revoked and a detailed investigation was begun. Scarano was not punished for flouting the city's zoning laws—which he did brazenly at the Finger Building, Williamsburg, in 2004—so much as lying about his misfiling to the city. The Department of Buildings has requested New York State, which regulates architecture licenses, to revoke the architect's license.

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WASA/
STUDIO A
AND ARUP

The space now known as the Jerome Robbins Theater was once simply Theater C, the subordinate of its companion theaters A and B at 37 Arts—a 50,000-square-foot complex of off-Broadway theaters and studio spaces on Manhattan's Far West Side. Designed as a rental house, Theater C was an austere concrete box with poor sightlines and lackluster acoustics. In 2008, the Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC), which occupied the upper floors of the building, acquired the space and, teaming with The Wooster Group, set out to transform this so-so black box into a top-of-the-line, 238-seat performing arts facility for dance, music, and theater. To see this through, BAC hired the integrated theater and acoustical consultant group at Arup and the architecture and engineering firm WASA/Studio A. The limitations of the existing space presented many challenges to the design, and the team worked closely together through the entire process, as no decision by one discipline could be made without coordinating with all of the rest.

Architecturally, Theater C did possess some charms. The team wanted to preserve and emphasize the timeless materiality of its concrete walls and the dramatic proportions of its tall, narrow volume. In order to do this, they

concentrated the seating in the center of the space, disconnecting it from the walls and creating the impression of floating within the theater's vertical dimensions. This arrangement also solved another problem, which was that the existing space had a convoluted ingress/egress scheme that created a different axis of symmetry for the stage and house. By moving the circulation passageways to the walls, replacing the existing balcony, and adding interconnecting stairs, the team was able to center the relationship between the spectators and the performers, immediately improving sightlines and intensifying the experience. The move also had an acoustical payoff: It created space around the audience, allowing them to be completely enveloped in sound.

The seating design itself is something of an anomaly in New York City. Rather than individual chairs, the team specified bench seats that fold down in twos and threes—a trend that is somewhat more common in Europe. The thinking behind this was to squeeze people together and give them a sense of sitting in a crowd. This sensation was reinforced by the rake of the deck, which causes sightlines—based on average ergonomics—to just skim the heads of the other spectators. Much of dance relies on minute

movements that may be difficult to read by those sitting far from the stage. By packing people together and making them aware of each other, the team hoped to create an amplification effect in which reactions from those sitting in the front row will travel like an electrical current through the audience to the last row, simply because each individual is aware of, if not touching, everyone else.

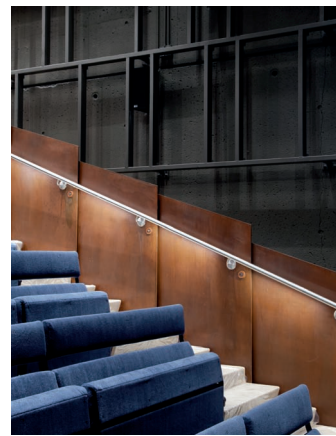
The Jerome Robbins Theater's varied program asked conflicting things of the acoustical design. Drama and dance usually use amplified sound, in which case reverberation within the room must be minimized. Live music, however, requires reverberation to enhance the richness of the sound. To create a variable acoustic solution for the space, the team bolted a steel grid to the theater's concrete walls, to which sound-absorbing panels can be attached. The panels can be added or taken away as needed, tuning the room anywhere on the reverberation spectrum from 0.8 seconds to 1.2 seconds. Arup used their sound lab to complete this part of the process—a room with acoustics that can be manipulated through a computer model to create an aural mapping of a proposed space, much like the visualization created by an architectural rendering.

Sound isolation was also diffi-



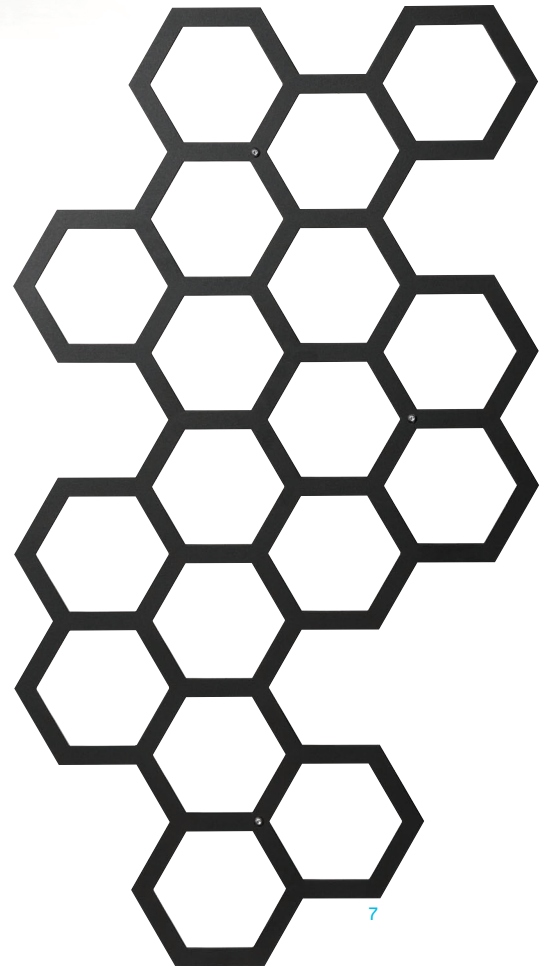
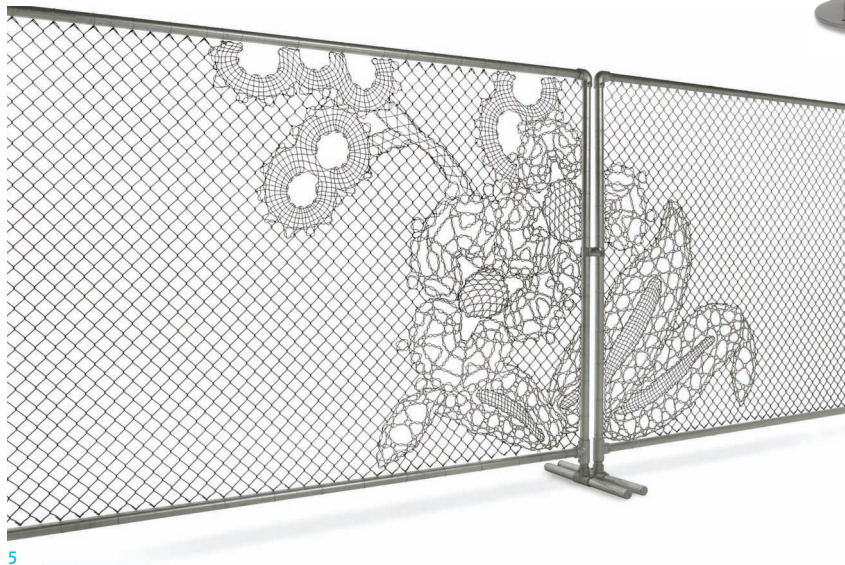
cult to achieve in Theater C. The team was able to insert a floating floor, but similar tactics could not be put in place along the walls without eating up valuable real estate. Heavy-duty doors were installed to block noise from the lobby and a custom-designed sound attenuator was placed within a fire duct to keep out street sounds. The mechanical systems, in a room just a corridor away, were replaced with low-noise units and threaded into the room in large ducts that keep the velocity of the air low but the volume high.

In keeping with the Wooster Group's advanced requirements, the theater systems themselves push the envelope for such a small space. The lighting system can accommodate as many as 264 dimmers, which, combined with the two dedicated follow spot



The Jerome Robbins Theater has one of the most sophisticated and technically advanced theater and lighting systems of any performance space of its size, and is capable of accommodating a varied program of dance, theater, and music. The designers chose materials that draw on the tension between raw and refined: Cor-Ten steel and polished wood, white carpet and concrete walls.

positions, creates a lush spectrum of possibilities. The rigging system is fully motorized, capable of lifting 1,750 pounds at 20 feet per minute. Such refinements are balanced by the simplicity of the architectural finishes, which play the line between raw and refined: Cor-ten steel railings contrast with polished wood and acrylic panels, creating a tension not unlike the one between audience and performer. **AARON SEWARD**



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Belgian firm Vyvey & Partners designed the Romeo & Juliet bench with large and small spaces in mind. The 10.5-foot-long Jatoba wood seats can be installed end-to-end to create a line of evenly spaced seating and trees, which are planted within fiberglass pots.
www.extremis.be

9 **TITIKAKA
BENCH**
B&B ITALIA

Designed by Naoto Fukasawa, the Titikaka outdoor bench has a curvilinear form that is sculptural as well as ergonomic. Eight-foot-long teak lathes over an aluminum frame reach the ground in the front and back, but the sides are open, creating a wave when used in multiples.
www.bebitalia.it



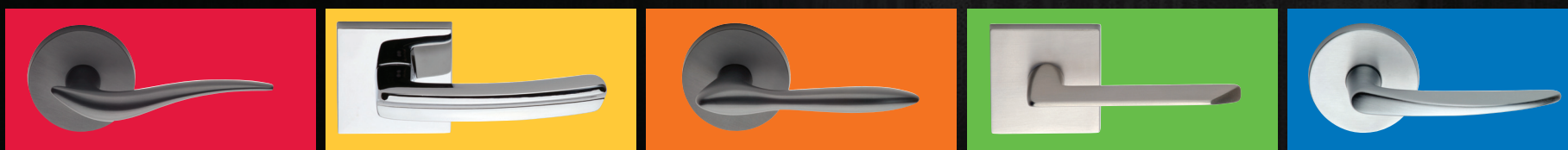
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REBOOTING THE BURBS



In the early 1950s, Long Island was the testing ground for some of the nation's first savvy suburbs, with Levittown a resonant symbol of postwar American values. Today, Nassau and Suffolk counties are once again trying to set a new standard with smart-growth projects underway from Mineola to Patchogue. By Jeff Byles

LIGHTHOUSE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Late last year, Tom Suozzi, the progressive Nassau County Executive, took stock of the surrounding landscape of aging suburbs and derelict downtowns. This bastion of single-family homes, he found, had reached a terminal state.

"Nassau County has stopped growing," he declared in an appeal to civic and business leaders. "We are suburban sprawled." In response, Suozzi put forth a plan he called New Suburbia: 90 percent of the land would be left as is, while the

remaining 10 percent would be rebuilt to bolster needed growth. Long Island, it seemed, was on the verge of a smart-growth revolution.

Suozzi was soon tossed out of office amid a taxpayer revolt, but make no mistake: New Suburbia is coming to

Long Island—and to downtowns across the nation. "Long Island has encountered problems that newer suburbs are going to encounter in the next five or six years," said Lawrence Levy, executive director of Hofstra University's National Center

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER MARCH 17, 2010



LIGHHOUSE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

for Suburban Studies. “What happens here is going to be the canary in the coal mine.”

Against a backdrop of eroding salaries, vanishing jobs, and a plummeting youth population—almost 70 percent of residents aged 18 to 34 say they’re itching to move out within the next five years—Long Island’s two suburban counties have become a test case for reverse-engineering sprawl. Suozzi may be gone, but in his wake town officials, citizens’ groups, architects, and planners are creating an eye-opening preview of suburbia’s next act. Throw in a new ideas competition sponsored by the Long Island Index, and the burbs might even be headed for a rebound.

Of the 95 smart-growth projects currently built, under construction, or in planning phases on Long Island, the poster child for suburban opportunities is by all accounts the Lighthouse, a planned \$3.74 billion project that would radically reinvent the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum as the centerpiece of a 150-acre,

mixed-use community.

A joint venture headed up by software entrepreneur Charles Wang and developer RXR, the project would encompass some 30 buildings—many of which would stand between 10 and 20 stories tall, a shocking sight in an area of two-story homes on cookie-cutter cul-de-sacs—and refurbish the coliseum for the New York Islanders hockey team, which Wang also owns. Though supported by Nassau County officials, the project has been roadblocked by the town of Hempstead, and is currently on hold pending further review of its scale and impact.

The appeal of the Lighthouse lies partly in the way it would knit together with a larger vision for the Nassau Hub spanning the coliseum along with the Roosevelt Field mall, Hofstra University, and parts of Mineola and Hempstead that could become a showcase for Long Island’s smart-growth aspirations. Connected by new light-rail lines linking to the Long Island Rail Road, it would be

hands down the most game-changing Long Island development since Levittown itself. “What makes this project unique for Long Island is that it has the opportunity to become a true place, destination, and essentially a new town center redeveloped out of a sea of asphalt and unworkable sprawl,” the smart-growth advocacy group Vision Long Island wrote in a strong endorsement.

But there are many other opportunities to reinvent Long Island. Indeed, a recent report released by the Long Island Index called *Places to Grow* found 8,300 acres of vacant land and parking lots in downtown areas that can be repurposed for new development, specifically citing two dozen places with high potential, among them Hempstead, Mineola, Patchogue, and Glen Cove. The latter, in fact, is currently home to a planned \$1 billion project known as Glen Isle, which shows how density can be grafted onto traditional town centers.

Located along the shore of Hempstead Harbor, the

56-acre development is being carried out in concert with a \$120 million Superfund cleanup of the former brownfield site. In 2008 developer RXR joined the team, helping design a plan with 860 residential units, a 250-suite hotel, office space, and public waterfront esplanade. Also on tap is a high-speed ferry terminal that won \$8 million in stimulus funding, and is expected to offer commuter service to Manhattan. The complex endeavor—involving public agencies that control the land and an ecological restoration—in some ways makes it a model for the New Suburbia. “It’s not just a private development deal,” said Matthew Frank, executive vice-president of development and design for RXR, which is currently finalizing project approvals. “It’s a public-private partnership. That way you get a coordinated balance between the needs of the community and the economic realities of building a successful development.”

Some of Long Island’s most creative smart-growth

Previous page:

Arrayed around a “grand canal,” the Lighthouse would transform 150 acres in Hempstead into 5.5 million square feet of mixed-use development.

Above:

The Nassau Coliseum would be renovated for the New York Islanders, fronting on a central, landscaped park.

Facing page, top:

Artspace Patchogue, an \$18 million project under construction near Patchogue’s main street, will offer 45 units of affordable live/work space for artists, with ground-floor commercial space.

Facing page, middle:

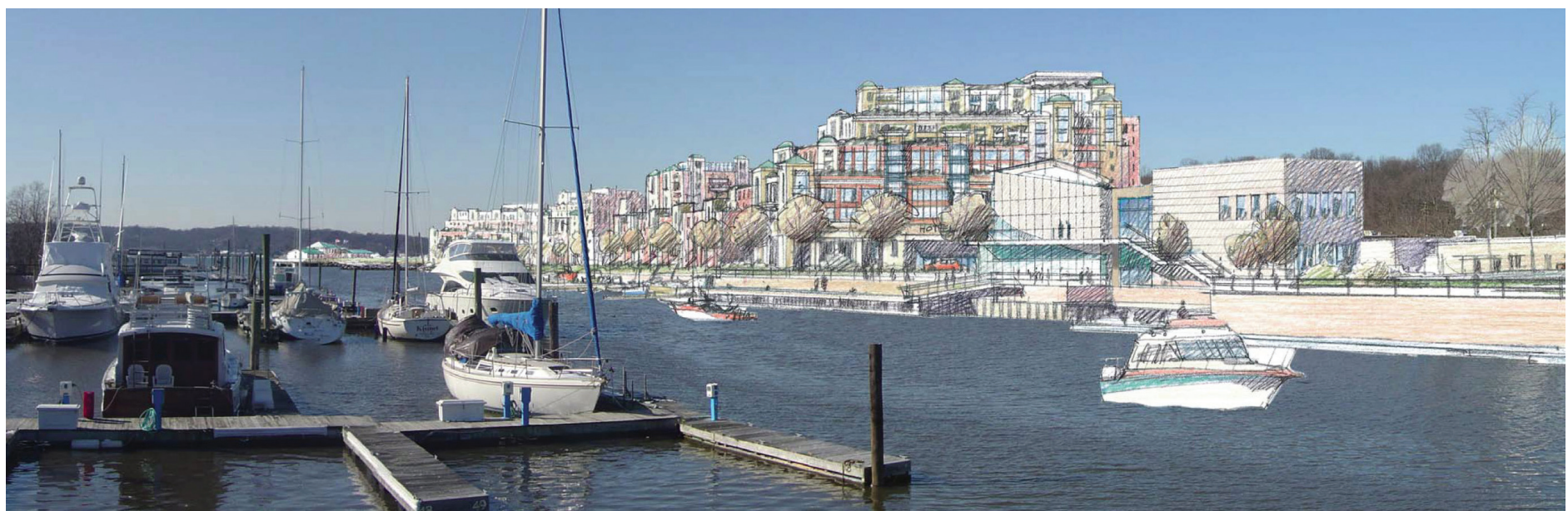
On a former brownfield in Glen Cove, the 56-acre Glen Isle will offer 860 residences in a mix of condo, rental, and affordable units, as well as office space, hotel, and retail. Lower-scale massing on the waterfront steps up to structures reaching 12 stories.

Facing page, bottom:

Hempstead’s Baldwin Commons is a 200,000-square-foot development by the Albanese Organization, planned to contain 140 units with a base of retail and below-ground parking.



HHL ARCHITECTS



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projects, however, have come out of small villages, where mayors directly control more of the land-use machinery. In Patchogue, for instance, several projects are reviving a downtown that had fallen on hard times. "One of the things Patchogue is blessed to have is quite a bit of blighted property," said Mayor Paul Pontieri. Several acres near the train station were transformed into two projects with a total of 80 condominiums and 48 apartments. "That's 22 or 23 per acre, but you'd never know it," Pontieri said. "I'm a believer that density is a product of design. If you design it properly, density will follow." Meanwhile, developer Tritec is now building a \$100 million, mixed-use project at the core of the business district that will house 240 apartments. Also under way is the Artspace Patchogue Lofts, containing ground-floor commercial space and 45 units of affordable live/work housing for artists and their families. The building is one of the few new downtown designs that departs from its

historic context. "Because it's a creative-class type of setting, we encouraged them to do something that reflects on the past, but more important, looks to the future," said Matthew Meier, partner of Buffalo-based Hamilton Houston Lownie Architects, which worked in collaboration with Gary Cannella Associates of Patchogue.

Projects like these can often be hamstrung by outmoded local ordinances. "A lot of the zoning on Long Island ends up coming down to parking," said Salvatore Coco, partner at Beatty, Harvey, Coco Architects, which is working on a 140-unit, sustainably designed development in Hempstead. Current zoning requires two parking spaces for every one-bedroom apartment, hardly a transit-oriented approach. "We've proposed a one-to-one ratio, and the fact that we're a half-mile away from the Baldwin train station actually makes this achievable," Coco said.

While still dominated by the car, Long Island's low-density downtowns are well poised for transit-oriented

development (TOD). John Loughran, senior associate at FXFowle and project manager for an update of the village of Hempstead's comprehensive plan, pointed out that beneath the omnipresent sprawl is a layer of transit infrastructure and density that simply needs to be reinforced. "Places like Hempstead, Garden City, and Rockville Centre were the original TOD," he said. "They all have transit at their core." And that has helped the region hang on with its core assets intact. "Long Island hasn't had the cascade of failure and the abandonment of malls and strip centers—yet," said June Williamson, professor of architecture at City College and co-author of *Retrofitting Suburbia*.

To help look toward the future, the Long Island Index is launching an ideas competition on March 31 called *Build a Better Burb*, with a \$10,000 top prize going to the most imaginative design visions for how Long Island's downtowns can be reinhabited in ways that are socially, economically, and environ-



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mentally sustainable. "Places like Stamford, Connecticut or in New Jersey have dramatically reimagined what they might be, but Long Island has fought these ideas tooth and nail," said Ann Golob, director of the Index. "We're really trying to push the edge of the envelope," she added. "It's going to take some people thinking pretty boldly about what might be possible."

JEFF BYLES IS MANAGING EDITOR AT AN.

MARCH

WEDNESDAY 17
EXHIBITION OPENING

Cars, Culture, and the City
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

LECTURES

Amy Gavaris, Peter Mullan, Connie Fishman, et al.
Waterfront Parks: Old, New, Green, Blue
5:30 p.m.
Roosevelt House
47-49 E. 65th St.
www.cunysustainablecities.org

Hayes Slade, James Slade, Sarah Dunn, and Martin Felsen
Emerging Voices
6:45 p.m.
New Museum
235 Bowery
archleague.org

THURSDAY 18
LECTURES

Meet the Artist: John Gerrard
7:00 p.m.
Hirshhorn Museum
Ring Auditorium
7th St. and Independence Ave.
Washington, D.C.
www.hirshhorn.si.edu

Gerrit Knaap
Maryland's Smart Growth Experience
12:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW, Washington, D.C.
www.nbm.org

SYMPOSIUM

Re: Modern Icons in the 21st Century
The United Nations Capital Master Plan
6:30 p.m.
Ford Foundation Auditorium
320 East 43rd St.
www.skyscraper.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Joe Deal
West and West: Reimagining the Great Plains
Robert Mann Gallery
210 11th Ave.
www.robertmann.com

Pixel by Pixel
Robert Kent Wilson
Raandesk Gallery of Art
16 West 23rd St.
www.raandeskgallery.com

FRIDAY 19

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Remember That You Will Die: Death Across Cultures
Rubin Museum of Art
150 West 17th St.
www.rmanyc.org

Joseph Smolinski
Chris Coffin
Mixed Greens
531 West 26th St.
www.mixedgreens.com

EVENT

Architectural Digest Home Design Show
10:00 a.m.
Pier 94
55th St. and the West Side Highway
www.archdigesthomeshow.com

SATURDAY 20
LECTURE

A Conversation with Elaine Summers
3:00 p.m.
New Museum of Contemporary Art
235 Bowery
www.newmuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Ralph Bakshi
The Streets
Animazing Gallery
54 Greene St.
www.animazing.com

Bill Albertini
Space Frame Redux
Martos Gallery
540 West 29th St.
www.martosgallery.com

Tamy Ben-Tor and Miki Carmi
Disembodied Archetypes
Zach Feuer Gallery
530 West 24th St.
www.zachfeuer.com

SUNDAY 21
EXHIBITION OPENING

Hendrick Avercamp
The Little Ice Age
National Gallery of Art
4th St. and Constitution Ave.
NW, Washington, D.C.
www.nga.gov

WITH THE KIDS

Family Art Project: Up Pops Spring
1:00 p.m.
Wave Hill
West 249th St. and Independence Ave.
www.wavehill.org

MONDAY 22

LECTURES
Keller Easterling
Disposition
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

Eric Sanderson
The Future of Mannahatta
6:30 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York
1220 5th Ave.
www.mcny.org

FILM

Petropolis: Aerial Perspectives on the Alberta Tar Sands
(Peter Mettler, 2009), 43 min.
4:00 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

TUESDAY 23
LECTURES

Shigeru Ban, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and Mariko Mori
Conscious Inspiration: Juxtaposing Nature & Art Form
6:30 p.m.
Japan Society
333 East 47th St.
www.japansociety.org

Homa Farjadi
Unsmooth Work
6:30 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

WEDNESDAY 24
LECTURES

Tatiana Bilbao, Stephanie Forsythe, and Todd MacAllen
Emerging Voices
6:45 p.m.
New Museum
235 Bowery
www.archleague.org

Emmet Gowin
My Own Life in Photography
7:00 p.m.
Museum of Fine Arts Boston
465 Huntington Ave., Boston
www.mfa.org

Shigeru Ban in conversation with Mohsen Mostafavi
NOW? Works and Humanitarian Activities
12:00 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

A History of the Future
Donna Goodman
6:30 p.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
www.skyscraper.org

Farshid Moussavi
Form and Ornament
6:30 p.m.
Columbia GSAPP
Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall
www.arch.columbia.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING

John Bartelstone
The Brooklyn Navy Yard
Powerhouse Arena
37 Main St., Brooklyn
www.powerhousearena.com

THURSDAY 25
LECTURES

Greg Brunkalla
6:30 p.m.
Apple Store Soho
103 Prince St.
www.apple.com/retail/soho

Bryan Bell
Design Activism
6:30 p.m.
Paul Rudolph Hall
180 York St., New Haven
www.architecture.yale.edu

Andrew Blauvelt and Marije Vogelzang
Transfiguring Practices
6:00 p.m.
Parsons the New School for Design
Alvin Johnson/
J. M. Kaplan Hall
66 West 12th St.
www.newschool.edu

FILM

D.C. Environmental Film Festival: Megamall
6:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW, Washington, D.C.
www.nbm.org

FRIDAY 26
SYMPOSIUM

HeadSpace: On Scent as Design
10:00 p.m.
Parsons the New School for Design
Tishman Auditorium
72 5th Ave.
transdesign.parsons.edu

FILM

Bruce Nauman at the 53rd Venice Biennale: Utopia at the Laguna
(Nina and Klaus Sohl, 2009), 27 min.
6:45 p.m.
Philadelphia Museum of Art
26th St. and the Benjamin Franklin Pkwy., Philadelphia
www.philamuseum.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Haunted: Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Ave.
www.guggenheim.org

SUNDAY 28
LECTURE

Pollock and Abstract Expressionism
Richard Turnbull
1:30 p.m.
Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd St.
www.moma.org

WITH THE KIDS

Arty Facts: Transformations
11:00 p.m.
Brooklyn Museum of Art
200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn
www.brooklynmuseum.org

MONDAY 29
LECTURE

David Leven and Stella Betts
Recent Work
5:30 p.m.
New Jersey School of Architecture Weston Hall
141 Summit St., Newark
architecture.njit.edu

EVENT

Workshop with Toshiki Okada
5:00 p.m.
Japan Society
333 East 47th St.
www.japansociety.org

TUESDAY 30
LECTURES

Casey Jones
E Pluribus Unum: Creating Design Policy in the U.S.A.
6:00 p.m.
School of Visual Arts
136 West 21st St.
www.sva.edu

Rafael Moneo
On How Difficulties/Contingencies Improve the Work of the Architect
6:30 p.m.
Harvard Graduate School of Design
48 Quincy St., Cambridge
www.gsd.harvard.edu

Thomas Sticker and Micheline Maynard
Green Japan Series: The Green Car of the Future
6:30 p.m.
Japan Society
333 East 47th St.
www.japansociety.org

EVENT

Rapid Response: Spontaneous Architecture
The Olympics
6:30 p.m.
Studio-X
180 Varick St.
www.arch.columbia.edu



CONTEMPLATING THE VOID:
INTERVENTIONS IN THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
1071 5th Avenue
Through April 28

The nearly 200 designers invited to propose interventions for the Guggenheim Museum on its 50th anniversary take literally the museum's invitation to "leave practicality or even reality behind." In *Contemplating the Void: Interventions in the Guggenheim Museum*, the void at the building's center gets filled with water, outfitted with a flight simulator, and re-cast in chocolate by designers as varied as Rachel Whiteread, Greg Lynn FORM, West 8, and Toyo Ito. Some entries at least leave the museum standing, like Nari Ward's vision of building a bell-tower-like folly (*Untitled*, 2009, above) whose shape would echo that of the ramp around it. Whether they're impossible or merely impractical, the entries in *Contemplating the Void* tend to take the form of doodles, scribbles, collage, and even typed notes, such that browsing the exhibition feels like peering into someone's sketchbook.



MODERNISM AT RISK:
MODERN SOLUTIONS FOR SAVING MODERN LANDMARKS

Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Place
Through May 1

In 2006, the World Monuments Fund launched *Modernism at Risk* to highlight an architectural legacy often overlooked by the preservation movement. The current exhibit at the Center for Architecture presents five modern masterpieces that have all been endangered, and tracks their varying fates. Paul Rudolph's Riverview High School in Sarasota, Florida was razed last year, while Warren Platner's Kent Memorial Library in Suffield, Connecticut (1972, above), was granted a reprieve in 2008, after the town voted not to replace the structure. The show includes five projects whose future remains unknown, among them Eero Saarinen's Bell Labs complex in New Jersey. Also on view is *Back on the Map: Revisiting the New York State Pavilion at the 1964/65 World's Fair*, exploring the past and future of Philip Johnson's pavilion and its large-scale terrazzo map of New York State.

Vicarious Living

The Houses of Greenwich Village
By Kevin D. Murphy, photography by
Paul Rocheleau
Abrams, \$45.00



The attic studio of the Cornelius Oakley House.

PAUL ROCHELEAU

New York is a city of neighborhoods. Many appear in fiction, but very few get architectural coverage. Greenwich Village is the exception. As the most storied place in Gotham, the Village has been well researched, has its own historical society, and its streets have been photographed by everyone from Edward Steichen to Annie Liebowitz. Nearly every New Yorker has her favorite haunt, a bistro, bar, or street corner with an indelible memory attached.

One might, then, be nonplussed to find another book on the quaint row houses that make up most of this intimate place of twisted streets and artsy cafes. Kevin Murphy's new treatment has an advantage that no previous book can boast: beautiful photographs of the interiors of many houses not normally open to the public. As in his previous book on the American town house, the author gets right to the heart of his subject and provides fascinating stories on both the houses and the people who built them. Paul Rocheleau provides the splendid photographs.

The two have chosen 20 of the most interesting houses in the Village and devoted a substantial photo essay to each, with accompanying text. Their book is nicely designed and produced by Abrams, the noted art book publisher. This book would make an excellent gift for your friends with an interest in New York and its architecture.

Murphy's short essay on the history of the Village covers no new ground, and might well have been more specific about the kinds of houses that were chosen for case studies. It has the advantage of presenting street scenes in historic photos from the collection of the Historic American Buildings Survey in the 1930s, a nice contrast to the

vivid color photos by Rocheleau. But most of the interesting narrative is reserved for the individual houses, and there is a lot more behind these brick facades than meets the eye.

Unlike most coffee table art books, this one marries probing, insightful photography with equally analytical text. Since Murphy is a noted art historian with expertise in American architecture, he seldom misses a chance to educate the reader about the subtleties of Federal and Greek Revival details, or the impact of economic development on New York in the 1830s, when the Village had the hottest real estate market in Manhattan. He points out that the John Grindley house (1827) owes some of its remarkable elegance to the fact that it was built by John Jacob Astor as a means of converting a former country estate, "Richmond Hill," into a real estate development that presaged the eventual expansion of housing northward on the island. As each house is presented chronologically, beginning in 1827, Murphy is able to relate the social history of the eras to the features and styles of each example. Modest dwellings such as the David Christie house (1824), built for the middle class, are contrasted with lavish houses for "swells" such as Irad Hawley, president of the Pennsylvania Coal Company, whose Fifth Avenue mansion (1852-53) is home to the Salmagundi Club. The lives of original owners are not the only ones examined, for many houses became significant after the Village was a mecca for artists and intellectuals during the 20th century. An 1827 house was renovated in 1893 to become the studio of Robert Blum, an artist associated with Whistler and early Japonisme in **continued on page 18**



Lab Zero's Minimum Mobile Module.

AT HOME IN UTOPIA

Self-Sufficient Housing
Edited by Vicente Gualart,
Willy Muller, and Lucas Cappelli
Actar, \$34.95

For those who waited for a design vision undivided from social and political content, *Self-Sufficient Housing* comes to present an old problem resurfacing from the 1970s: the belief in the possibility of systematizing the house into a self-sufficient, autonomous, and regenerative unit capable of harnessing its waste and providing its own energy. According to the directors of the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC), who organized an international competition featured in the pages of the book, this

emergent position is timely, not only as a technological problem but as a sociopolitical statement against ruthless urban sprawl, critical exploitation of natural resources, and the generic demands of the free market. As a symptom of a new reality inundated with environmental catastrophes, sudden climatic changes, garbage-packed metropolises, and para-economies of non-recyclable e-waste, environmental consciousness reemerges as an inevitable cultural armature for architects. Immersed in oblivion through postmod-

ernism, deconstruction, and "blobism," we find ourselves faced again with a sense of urgency to not only "be green," therefore ethical, sensible, and politically correct, but to assemble the pieces of a collective design imagination for an ill-managed planet.

There is nothing new to the theme of the first Advanced Architecture Contest offered by the IAAC, showcased in the book. "Self-sufficiency" does not arrive in the break of the 21st century to replace or enhance Le Corbusier's "machine **continued on page 18**

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VICARIOUS LIVING continued from page 17 America. The design, by Carrère & Hastings, reminds us of the bohemian atmosphere that existed in New York around 1900, when modern art was in a period of gestation on both sides of the Atlantic. The building later served as the studio of the noted architectural painter, Jules Guérin.

At the end of the book are two patently modernist interventions into the fabric of this charming corner of New York, and both seem very much at home. One, designed in 2003, is a clever insertion into an 1801 row house. The other, from 2005, is a new house occupying a small slice in the streetscape. One quibble with this necessarily abbreviated story is that little is said about the period of the "Brown Decades," from the 1860s until 1900, when many sandstone-fronted Italianate and Richardsonian houses were built in Manhattan. Though the Village was by this time a mature neighborhood, there are significant examples from this period, such as the twin houses designed by Robert Mook at 74 and 76 Perry Street in 1866. Perhaps we'll see a second volume.

One of the best things about *The Houses of Greenwich Village* is its intimate, insider's point of view. Both Murphy and Rocheleau bring us as close as possible to the artifacts and lives of the people who made these domestic environments. My favorite is the restoration/conversion by contemporary photographer John Dougdale of the 1828 Cornelius Oakley house. The contrast between the Greek Revival décor and his wonderful collection of artifacts offers a compelling story of rebirth. Before he arrived, the house had been converted to apartments, destroying its character. He lovingly restored every original room. Today he makes old-fashioned photographs in a charming top-lit studio, just as his bohemian brethren did a century ago.

MARK ALAN HEWITT IS AN ARCHITECT AND WRITER.

AT HOME IN UTOPIA continued from page 17 for living" with a century-wide historic gap. Let us only recall *Architectural Design's* July 1972 issue "Designing for Survival," its January 1976 issue "Autonomous Houses," Brenda and Robert Vale's *Autonomous House* (1975), Grahame Caine's *Ecological House* (1972), Farallone Institute's *The Integral Urban House: Self Reliant Living in the City* (1979), and the entire generation of do-it-yourselfers in the American communes of the Southwest rising from the *Whole Earth Catalog*. Self-sufficiency, as seen in ecological houses equipped with digesters, hydroponic systems, composting devices, greenhouses, solar components, and wind generators, has been the object of intense transdisciplinary alternative technology debates, attributing to the house a living agency instrumentalized in terms of input and output. The emergence of ecological awareness in the 1970s has been closely linked to the "expansion" of the *oikos*, meaning a novel perception of the house being interconnected to global currents and flows. However, what is in fact new to the international competition organized by the IAAC is that the idea of self-sufficiency is neither promoted as an ethical imperative recasting moral values in design thinking, nor as an inevitability guided by fear of a forthcoming doomsday that Willy Muller (development director of the IAAC) called "romantic nihilism." Instead, the agenda formed both by the competition's organizers as well as the collection of diverse proposals for single self-sufficient

housing and collective self-sufficient housing looks elsewhere: It critically recognizes pollution and waste as generative potential for design, and hints toward what Vincente Guallart calls a "new materiality" that inexorably becomes a requisite part of our discipline.

In the many adaptable, seasonal, recirculatory, and evolutionary structures proposed, the questions put on the table go far beyond the selection of certain materials certified by the LEED program and labeled as ecological. Besides the value of a material as a finished, catalogued object, taxonomized as "eco-friendly," other parameters come to play a vital part in the sustainability debate, such as the lifecycle of a material, the process of its production, the minimal footprint that a building may have, and the reuse of building components after a designated time. As demonstrated by the range of projects published in the book, sustainability, besides a simple choice to select certain design schemes and materials, is about systems thinking and cycles of production. However, this valid account arrives through a disparate assemblage of design proposals, revealing that the formal language of this disciplinary field is unarticulated. From boxes to blobs, trapezoids to geodesic domes, towers to warm buildings, we can rightfully ask: Does anything go? Are we back to eclecticism backed up by cyclic explanatory diagrams or what Ray Smith coined in 1977 as *Supermannerism*? Can sustainable design accept any form?

Flipping through the collection of

submitted proposals, we may account that the environmental question can be pronounced more efficiently through code and not through form. It is about a "know-how" to classify, handle, access, distribute, and direct environmental information of complex ecosystems. The projects awarded delved on cyclic feedback loops of provisions, diligent classifying of resources, overall in operational and performative functions, much like in a mathematical equation. Besides, computation languages and recycling are founded on similar operational agendas: closed iterative loops, where in the former case, information outside of the productive cycle is defined as "noise," in the latter case, information outside of the productive cycle is defined as "waste" or "garbage." It is therefore worthwhile to observe that two major peripheral areas of the architectural discipline, computation and sustainability, considered almost in all cases as disjunctive or irrelevant fields, stem from equivalent epistemological aspirations.

It may be in this epistemological fusion that Vincente Guallart expresses his hope "to ask more of architecture." Can environmental concerns regain public interest and capture the imagination of architects and designers? Can architecture be socially driven against the random demands of the free market, while maintaining the object of its inspiration? Stay tuned.

LYDIA KALLIPOLITI IS A LECTURER AT THE COOPER UNION AND A PhD CANDIDATE AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.



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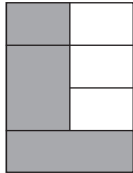


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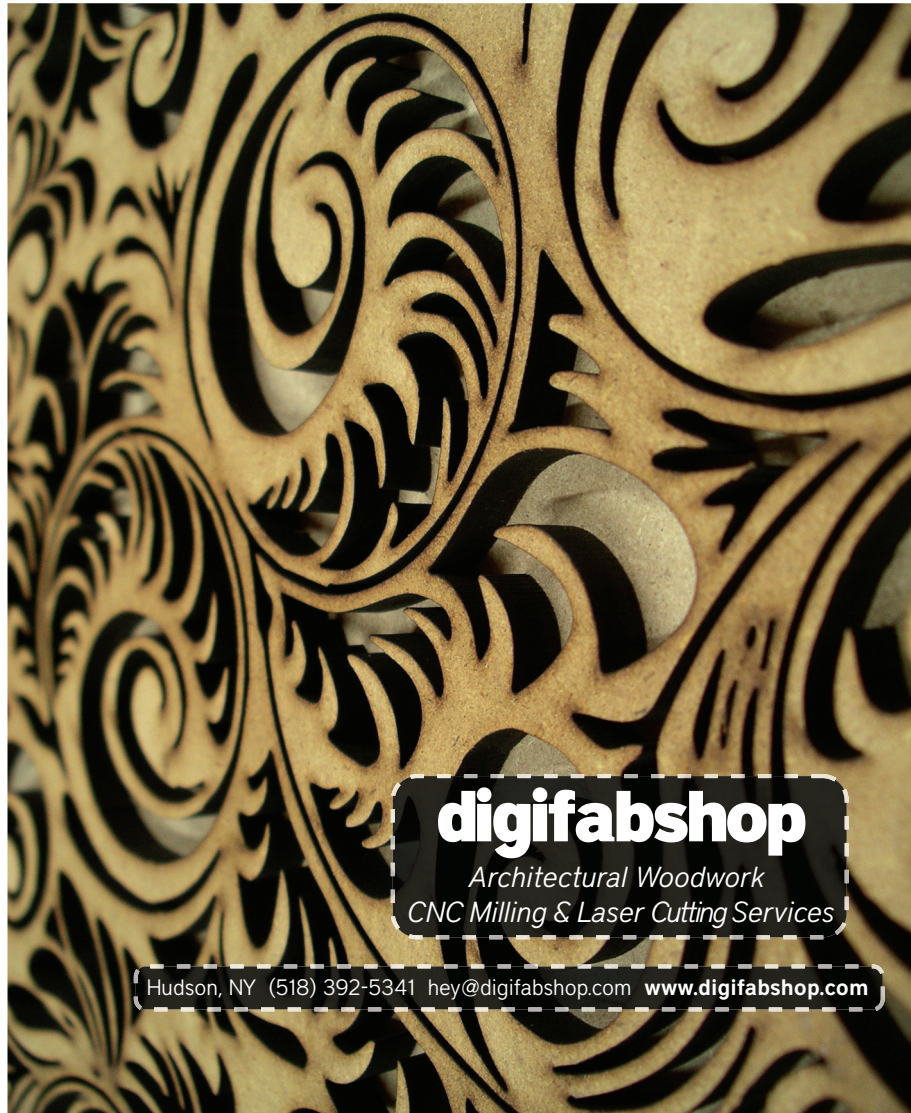


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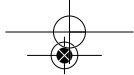
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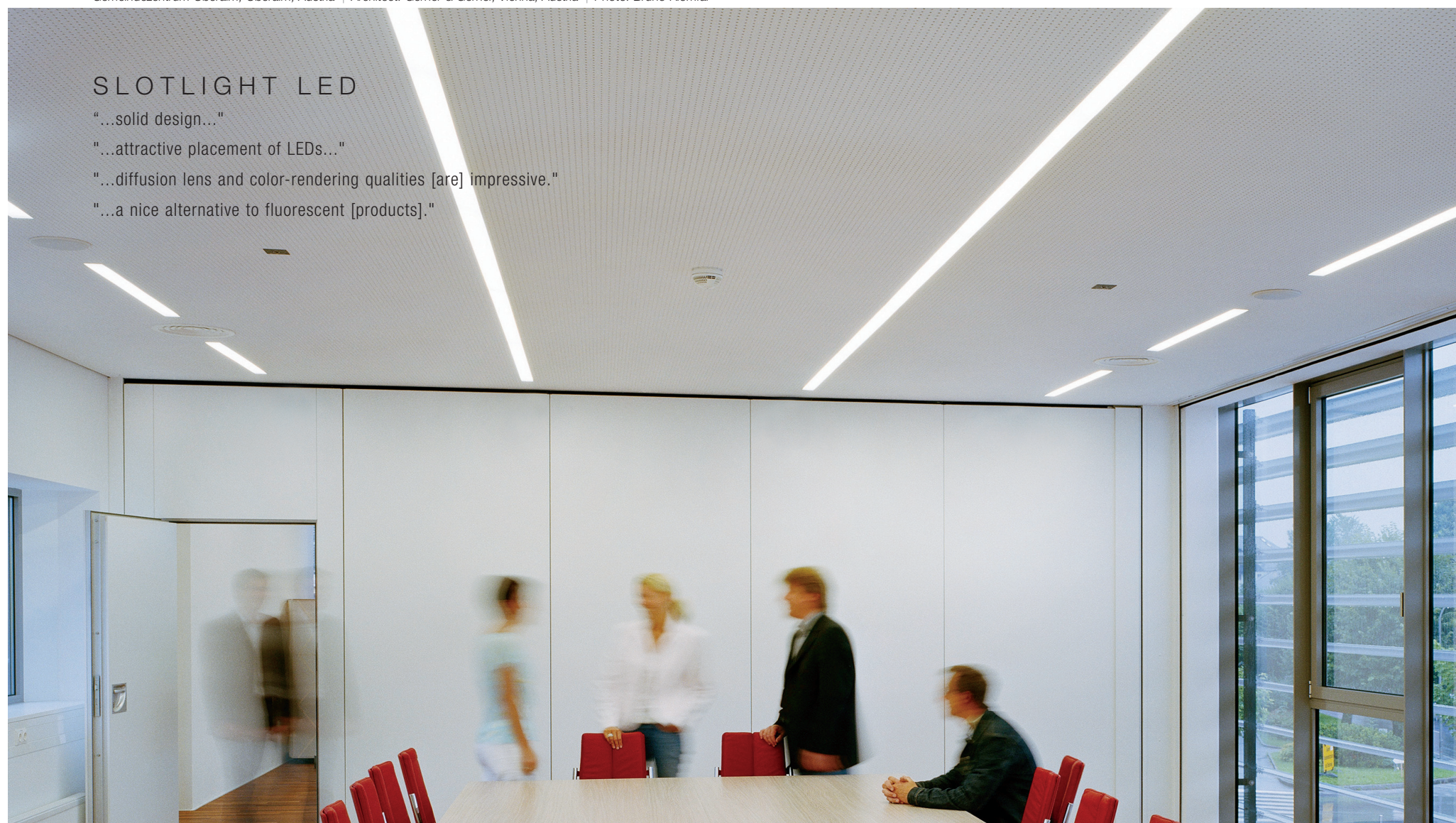
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